

a button on the ski pole grip and mechanically coupled to the finger, the button depressible by a thumb on the hand of the skier to retract the finger from the notch in the end portion of the pin, causing the pin to detach from the attachment mechanism and move out of the channel and toward a top end of the hand of the skier while same hand of the skier remains wrapped around the ski pole grip.

REMARKS

The Examiner has indicated that claims 1-7 and claim 11 are allowed. Claims 8-10 and 12 are rejected 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Douillet, European Patent No. 370,900 in view of Wittstock, German Patent No. 4,103,235.

The Examiner states that the language allowing a function to occur is not equivalent to language reciting that function does indeed occur. Claims 8 and 10 have been amended to state affirmatively that a button depressible by a thumb on the hand of the skier disengaging the attachment mechanism from the pin "causes" the ejection mechanism to eject the pin horizontally from the channel out over a top end of the hand of the skier while said same hand of the skier remains wrapped around the ski pole grip.

This is not suggested in Douillet or Wittstock. The system in Douillet does not allow the thumb of a skier to depress button 37 and at the same time allow pin 44 to eject horizontally from the channel 34 out over a top end of the hand of the skier while that same hand of the skier remains wrapped around the ski pole grip as specified in claims 8 and 10. Referring to FIGS. 6 and 8 of Douillet, if a skier used his or her thumb to depress the lever 37, then the pin 44 at the same time necessarily has to snugly butt up into channel 34. This is clearly shown in FIG. 8. The position of lever 37 is on the back side of the ski pole grip 27 and the location of the pin 42,44 is against the palm of the skiers hand. Because the lever 37

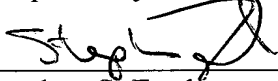
is on the backside of the ski pole grip, a skier could not use their thumb to press down lever 37 and still allow the pin 44 to be ejected from channel 34.

In Douillet, if the hand of the skier is still wrapped around the ski pole grip and the thumb is then used to press down latch 37, the pin (44, 42) will not go anywhere. Thus, when the skier releases the latch 37 with the thumb, before they let go of the ski pole grip, the latch arm 39 has already locked back onto pin 44.

The strap release mechanism as defined in claims 8 and 10 of the present invention allow a skier to press down the release button with his or her thumb while their hand is still wrapped around the ski pole grip and at the same time allows the pin to eject horizontally out from the channel. The skier is then free to let go of the ski pole grip at anytime without inadvertently relatching the pin onto latch arm. Thus, the strap and pin can be released with the skier's thumb without the skier first having to let go of the ski pole grip with his or her hand. This provides a safer, more reliable, and easier to operate release mechanism that disclosed in Douillet.

Accordingly, applicant requests that the amendments be entered and the application be allowed.

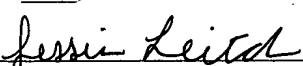
Respectfully submitted,


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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the claims:

8. (Thrice Amended) A quick release attachment system for coupling a hand of a skier to a ski pole, comprising:

a ski pole grip having a front side and back side, joined by opposite lateral sides and having a cross-sectional shape sized so that the hand of the skier can be wrapped around the ski pole grip in a gripping manner;

a pin attached to the hand of a skier;

an attachment mechanism disposed within the ski pole grip for receiving and locking the pin to the ski pole grip;

an ejection mechanism;

an elongated channel extending in a horizontal direction into the front side of the ski pole grip substantially above the hand of the skier while said hand is wrapped around the ski pole grip, so that the pin can insert horizontally into the channel and engage with the attachment mechanism while moving the ejection mechanism into a cocked position; and

a button extending from the ski pole grip and mechanically coupled to the attachment mechanism, the button depressible by a thumb on the hand of the skier disengaging the attachment mechanism from the pin causing the ejection mechanism to eject the pin horizontally from the channel out over a top end of the hand of the skier while said same hand of the skier remains wrapped around the ski pole grip.

10. (Twice Amended) A quick release attachment system for coupling a hand of a skier to a ski pole, comprising:

a ski pole grip having a front side and back side, joined by opposite lateral sides and

having a cross-sectional shape sized so that the hand of the skier can be wrapped around the ski pole grip in a gripping manner;

a pin connected to a glove of a skier, the pin having an end portion which includes a notch;

an attachment mechanism disposed within the ski pole grip for receiving and releasably locking the pin to the ski pole grip; the attachment mechanism including:

92 an elongated channel extending in a horizontal direction into the front side of the ski pole grip above the hand of the skier while said hand is wrapped around the ski pole grip;

a retractable finger protruding across a portion of the channel, the pin inserting horizontally into the channel and engaging the notch with the finger; and

a button on the ski pole grip and mechanically coupled to the finger, the button depressible by a thumb on the hand of the skier to retract the finger from the notch in the end portion of the pin, causing the pin to detach from the attachment mechanism and move out of the channel and toward a top end of the hand of the skier while same hand of the skier remains wrapped around the ski pole grip.